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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Sovereign Lord, our God and King, You have promised that those who trust You will not miss out on anything good.

Give to our Senators the wonder of Your grace. Impart to them the wisdom to use their talents for Your purpose and glory. Today, surround them with the shield of Your favor and use them as instruments of Your will. May their thoughts and actions please You, for You are the one Who fills our lives with gladness.

Remind us all that when our lives please You, You enable us to live in peace even with our enemies.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today, at 10:45, the Senate will resume consideration of the Department of Defense au-

thorization bill. The bill's two managers, Chairman WARNER and Senator LEVIN, will be here to continue to work on this important bill. Although there will be no votes during today's session, Senators are encouraged to come today and speak on the bill. Senators who are intending to offer amendments should be consulting with the managers on getting their amendments in the queue.

Senators are reminded there is a scheduled vote for 5:30 on Monday on a U.S. circuit judge nomination. We could possibly have additional votes on Monday evening on amendments to the Defense bill.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, just very briefly, I want to comment on the supplemental appropriations bill we passed yesterday morning.

I commend Senator COCHRAN and really both of the managers, and all of our colleagues, as well as the House, and especially Congressman LEWIS, for their leadership in crafting a package that reflects our commitment to economic growth, that keeps America moving forward, that is fiscally responsible.

As the majority says time and time again, the Federal budget is not the Government's money. It is the taxpayers' money. Americans work hard to get what they earn. And it is our responsibility to spend that money wisely, appropriately.

That is why we are working hard to crack down on excessive Washington spending. And I think the way that supplemental bill was handled from the beginning, and especially at the end, reflects that fiscal responsibility. As we all know, that bill did reflect a lot of priorities of this body, but it grew and grew and grew. Once that bill was taken to conference, under the leadership of Chairman COCHRAN and Con-

gressman LEWIS, it was scaled back down to meet the specific guidelines and request of the President of the United States. I think we exercised fiscal restraint and responsibility, but still there is a lot more we do need to do in terms of demonstrating that fiscal restraint and that responsibility.

One of our big challenges is the fact that much of our spending is on autopilot. We see that in our entitlement programs. Also, our budgetary process—the way it is conducted—leaves little time for oversight as to the spending.

I mention that because I want to express my strong support for the efforts of our budget chairman, Senator GREGG, for an act that is called the SOS Act, called the Stop Overspending Act, that will be marked up by his committee, addressed in his committee next week. What it is—and he introduced it to many of us this week—is a broad package on the budgetary process. It is a package of reforms that will tamp down on and give us the tools and ways to control excessive spending.

It adopts the President's proposal to establish a legislative line-item veto. It would reestablish spending caps which have been used effectively in the past. It initiates across-the-board reductions in entitlement spending if the Federal deficit fails to meet specific established targets.

It includes a proposal I have been very supportive of and introduced actually when I first arrived in the Senate to put the budget on a 2-year budget cycle, thereby giving us time for appropriate oversight.

I realize enacting this entire bold package—comprehensive in many ways, this SOS package—would be a huge challenge, particularly in Washington where the forces of spending from below, from within, remain so strong. But achieving even one of the reforms or, hopefully, several of the reforms of this package would be a major

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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